LECTURE

ON THE

PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

OF THE

DROITWICH BRINE BATHS,

WITH A SHORT

HISTORY OF CASES

AND THEIR TREATMENT,

BY

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"REMARKS ON THE DROITWICH SALINE SPRINGS AND BATHS," ETC.

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DEDICATION.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD HAMPTON, G.C.B.

My Lord,

It is acknowledged on all hands that the origination of a new undertaking is usually attended with many difficulties, and I do not wish to conceal that I have had my fair share of adverse circumstances to encounter, in bringing the Royal Brine Baths of Droitwich under the favourable notice of the public. That I have been enabled to accomplish this object, I owe, in no slight degree, to your Lordship's unvarying kindness and valuable counsel. Allow me then to acknowledge my obligation, which I do not look forward to any means of repaying, by requesting you to accept at my hands the dedication of a Lecture* which owes its origin to your own kind suggestion, and its favourable reception in great measure to your presence and countenance at the moment of delivery.

I am, my Lord,

Your obliged and faithful Servant,

W. H. BAINBRIGGE.

Royal Brine Baths,
Droitwich.

*Given at Worcester, September 12th, 1877.

LECTURE.

At the close of some Lectures which it was my pleasure and privilege to deliver in this place, some two years since, on subjects of general physiological interest, a promise was elicited from me to add to the course a further and final address, which should explain the causes which have led me to resume my functions, and to devote the final years of my life to the pursuit of the important science of health.

I lectured at Worcester because I reside at Droitwich, and I reside at Droitwich because my eyes have been opened to the remarkable curative properties of its Springs. I am not, however, the first of my brethren whose attention has been drawn to this subject, and it is due to my Right Honourable Friend who presides, and who elicited from me the promise to give some details of the efficiency of the Droitwich Waters, to say that I believe I shall best fulfil his wishes, if I shall be able to render to each person who has been even remotely instrumental in promoting the use of these Waters his due share of acknowledgment and recognition.

I do not know that it has ever been told of the Inhabitants of Britain that they have been specially addicted to Bathing. It has since their history was first written been a characteristic of the Germans. The ancient Romans also were ever devoted to luxurious lavations, and they introduced elaborate systems of Baths, of which the traces are to be found wherever these conquerors penetrated. These Baths, as at Treves, where the remains are still splendid, did not supersede but co-existed with the German habit of River Bathing. Perhaps it was this ancient custom which Tacitus describes, which led our Teutonic Cousins

so readily to appreciate the medicinal properties of all the rich Mineral Springs which abound in their land, and hence, no doubt, the long established celebrity of their countless Spas. The English however, for two centuries past, have frequented such Waters as exist in our own land, and Towns of no small celebrity and beauty, such as Bath, Cheltenham, Leamington, and others, have sprung up aronnd them. But it would seem, that commercial and agricultural advantages and neccssities have turned the attention of residents from the medicinal and hygienic properties of Droitwich Brine. The merchant and the manufacturer have forestalled the valetudinarian, who for years has dwelt near these precious sources, and might have remained still in his impotence if the concurrent finger of some messenger of heaven, and the all present providence of the Saviour of all men, had not bidden many a sufferer, by the aid of these Waters, to arise and walk.

The History of the growth of the Baths, which now form a principal feature of the Town of Droitwich has been often told but may be here repeated. More than forty years since, Sir Charles Hastings, well known in this town, drew attention to the curative properties of *Droitwich Brine.* Baths were formed chiefly for the use of the neighbouring poor who resorted thankfully to them for the cure of Rheumatism. The system of Baths extended, and a Company was formed which enjoyed a certain success. Following upon this, I was invited to visit the Town, and to inspect and direct the application of the Water. By means of further negociations, I became more closely associated with a second Company, and for several years the number of Bathers have steadily increased as the sale of tickets testifies. At length the present Bath House passed into my hands, and the Bath Establishment has been considerably extended, and I may say, in some measure completed by the addition of the large Swimming Bath. And I would here remark, that it has been found necessary, in order to render this Bath (the most powerful Mineral Bath in the World) more suitable for the cases which require its application, that its temperature should vary from 80 to 90 deg. Fah. This Bath is found to be one of the most

efficient Baths in the Establishment, and although the expense of thus heating so large a body of water is very great, its effects have fully compensated for so large an outlay. I am now responsible for the whole of the administration, and make it a point of honour to allow of no interference on matters which I deem to be of primary importance. Let me now point out what are the cases and complaints which have proved amenable to the treatment which is here administered, and what is the class of patients whom I may, without fear of causing disappointment invite to visit these Springs. Nor need we indeed confine our expectations of producing relief merely in certain specific complaints, such as Gout, Rheumatism, or other developed cases. The truth is, that most diseases are symptomatic, and are traced to stomachic derangement. When the seat of the digestive functions is in perfect order, the blood which is produced by digested food is pure and invigorating, and imparts its wholesome propreties to the whole frame. Whereas, when the stomach harbours impurities and acidities, all that proceeds from it becomes tainted. We have reason to believe that these Waters exercise effects of no ordinary powers upon the stomach and other digestive organs, and by this means impart tone and vigour to them, and render them pre-eminently the organs for restoring and renovating the whole system.

In a Lecture of this kind, specially given for the information of the public, you will agree with me it would be quite out of place to attempt to enter minutely into the details of cases and their treatment. I shall hope at no very far distant opportunity, to solicit the attention of my professional brethren to some observations which further time and experience may enable me to make on the action of these Waters, and their effects in many cases of serious diseases. It would be taking up too much of your time also if I were to commence my remarks on the vast number of cases which have come under my care from the time I first had the management of the Baths. I shall therefore confine myself to those cases which I have received into my own house during the last half-year, and which give a tolerably fair idea of the treatment administered to the remainder.

These cases for the half-year number one hundred and fifty-one, which I shall divide into classes as follows :—

General Rheumatic cases...	42
Gout, pure and simple	22
Gout and Rheumatism	20
Neuralgia	8
Paralysis	5
Supposed Consumption, with extreme debility and other attendant symptoms	7
Diabetes	3
Disease arising from general derangement from various causes	41
Specific affections, arising from causes unconnected with general health	3
TOTAL ...	151 Cases.

Rheumatism in all its multitudinous and various forms, is one of the most common, most painful, and severe complaints of our country. It arises from an ill-condition or morbid state of the blood. The poison is not confined to any particular tissue or organ, though it most particularly affects the joints, their sheaths and coverings, ligaments, tendons, as well as all the fibro-serous membranes of the body. A remarkable feature in this disease is its ever changing character and locality. Thus the inflamation may suddenly leave one joint and fly to another. Rheumatism is also frequently complicated with other diseases, such as Bronchitis, Pleurisy, and others. What we have now, however, most particularly to do with is the treatment. We find Bleeding, Blisters, Purgatives, Opiates, Quinine, American Hellebore, Nitrate of Potash, Iodide of Potassium, Bark, Ammonia, and a host of other drugs have been given, with what success may in some degree be gathered, when we see the still numerous sufferers that flock to the Droitwich Baths. To eliminate the poison from the system, powerful purgatives have been resorted to, the mischievous effects of which I believe are second only to those produced by bleeding. It

becomes therefore doubtful how far such remedies as I have mentioned are to be relied upon. Out of the many hundred cases I have treated by the use of these Waters, I have never yet found it necessary or desirable to avail myself of one of them, either for relieving the acute pain, or to establish any new action in the system; and I have never yet met with a case where pain the most acute, arising from Neuralgia, Rheumatism, or Gout, has not been relieved while under the influence of the Bath, a most important fact.

Let me now endeavour to repeat what I have before stated in another place, that the mistake sufferers are apt to make is, that these Waters are only effective in *certain types of disease*. Now this arises from not knowing what disease really is; what is disease, and what are the causes producing it? Of course I do not include organic lesions of the body. Where an organ is from actual or even partial degeneration no longer capable of performing its function there can be no cure. I allude only to a deviation from the organic force of the system deranging the natural condition which constitutes *health*. All disorders are dependent upon an abnormal condition of the vital functions. If perfectly carried on, growth and health result, but if imperfectly performed, derangement ensues, and misery and wretchedness become the lot of unhappy sufferers. Pure blood is the mainspring of nutritive life; impure blood the predisposing cause af all diseased action, producing the many varied and interminable symptoms we call *disease*, and which may exist in numerous forms without symptoms of either Rheumatism or Gout. When this is the case, we immediately endeavour to correct the deranged functions, and for this object we require an *assistant* to enable us to eliminate quickly and safely the impurities alluded to. Now the skin is frequently the first organ implicated. The sudden and variableness of temperature, so constantly taking place in our climate directly affects the functions of the skin, and when this is the case, the internal organs immediately suffer. Through the skin then we have, by the *judicious use* of this stimulating Water, a *remedy* both *safe* and *effectual*. The powerful alkalies are rapidly absorbed; capillary

circulation is restored; gouty acidities are corrected; a most agreeable action is produced; and the health of the patient becomes re-established, and all symptoms, whether *Gout*, *Rheumatism*, *Neuralgia*, or the many others which are legion, disappear. My own experience, together with the success that has followed the treatment, convinces me that more energetic influence is produced on the internal organs of digestion, in these cases of deranged health, by the assistance of these powerful Waters through the medium of the skin, than by any other known remedy. We find that when the digestive functions are improved, the morbid materials in the blood, which have become deposited in the tissues of the joints and in other parts of the frame, require some ingredient possessing powerful solvent properties to get rid of them. Now the base of these morbid deposits being of an *alkaline character*, we are provided with an antidote in the shape of another *alkaline*, which, if in excess of the former renders it *soluble*, so that it cannot possibly be due to the simple action of water, whether hot or cold, but this effect must arise from the absorption of *powerful agents contained in the Brine.* It is, therefore, on the solvent properties of the *alkalies* contained in the *Droitwich Water*, that we can alone account for the rapidity of their effects, such as are frequently presented in cases where patients, after *a course of Baths*, are seen to throw away their sticks or crutches, and commence the natural use of their limbs. Most sufferers are cognizant of the obstinacy and tenacity of these *fixed deposits in stiff joints*, or other *articulations*, and before such fixed deposits can be absorbed, they must be reduced to a fluid state, so as to render them fit to be held in solution in the blood vessels. Great caution is therefore necessary regarding the number of Baths to be taken consecutively, and the time during which the patient should remain in the Bath. And it is my duty to warn all bathers against the dangers of incautious use of the Baths, a warning particularly applicable to Droitwich, owing to the peculiar and unexceptionable strength of the Saline Ingredients. A Lady afflicted 12 years with chalk stones, and who had tried Baths of all countries without relief, came as a last resource to these Baths. The effect was so rapid, all symptoms

disappeared in 3 weeks, four large chalk deposits on the left hand being completely absorbed in that small space of time.

During the same period we find 22 cases of Gout, and 20 cases of so called "Gout and Rheumatism combined." These latter cases so nearly resemble each other, I shall class them together, as the treatment varies but little. The impartiality of Nature is strongly shewn in these attacks. *Sydenham* says that Gout "kills more rich men than poor, more wise than simple; kings, emperors, generals, admirals, philosophers, have all died of Gout." Many unfortunate sufferers, either led or willing to believe that an attack of Gout is useful and salutary, helping to prolong life and drive away other maladies, endeavour to console themselves by this ignorant and common idea, but the contrary is the truth. These never ending attacks produce sooner or later local mischief which increases in every periodical return, and finally terminate only in death. The symptoms of Gout are too well known to require description from me. Gout is a specific inflamatory disease, and is said frequently to communicate an hereditary *taint.* This latter supposition I much doubt, believing that this peculiarity depends more upon individual constitution and habits than upon any specific casuality inherited from parents. We should be nearer the mark if we gave the credit to a little port, sherry, strong ale and porter, and a host of other stimulants. Too much animal food and rich diet are also frequent causes, which, together with liberal potations of every kind of alcoholic beverages, produce, and will produce, this most wretched of all sufferings, *Gout.*

In treating Gout by the use of these Baths, I would observe that great caution is necessary, especially where any anomalous affections of the different organs exist. *Specific Medicines* will temporarily relieve acute symptoms, but, from my own experience, I must confess they do little in producing *permanent cure,* and on this account Gout has been truly described as the "*Opprobium Medicorum.*" In all the cases under my care at the Baths, I have never had occasion to administer a single dose, and I have found, that so soon as the dyspeptic symptoms subside, the Baths produce a powerful effect for good. The medicinal effects derived from these Waters result from the faculty possessed by the

external skin in absorbing, not only their gaseous products, but the various saline particles held in solution, and hence arises improved general circulation from increased capillary action. The Baths also lessen the solids and the blood corpuscles, increase the proportion of water, and it is in this way that Gout, with or without Rheumatism, Rheumatism, and Rheumatic enlargements with stiffened joints, are decreased and modified, and all the natural secretions vigorously augmented. I have had cases where every joint in the body has been affected, the patients unable even to stand or walk, or even use their fingers, from excessive pain. The account these patients give is, "Medicines relieved me at first but failed to do any permanent good, and months and years passed away and I became a confirmed cripple." These cases, most distressing to the anxious practitioner, as well as producing intense suffering to to the patient, have been greatly benefitted and enabled to walk from the use of the Baths, and it is truly gratifying to find that these Brine Baths have the power of producing such wonderful amelioration under such distressing circumstances.

Next in my list stands Paralysis, a fearful spectre in the shape of disease. The aged, middle aged, and youth, struck motionless and helpless almost without any apparent cause, a sad spectacle to beholding friends, rendered more so life being often undisturbed for years. Patients labouring under partial paralysis from variety of causes have been more numerous. Here the Baths were most efficient, and proved their wonderful tonicity in restoring the loss of nerve power.

The remaining cases, Diabetes three, accidental causes not affecting health three, and 41 cases suffering from General Derangement with various symptoms I shall only briefly allude to. The three former were very serious cases, and these had previously been under the care of other professional men. On examination, these patients presented evident symptoms of *Diabetes.* After some Baths their general appearance showed marked improvement, the symptoms gradually disappeared, and in a few weeks they were enabled to return to their homes quite well. I do not hesitate to affirm after careful consideration (though others may differ with me), that in these cases a vicarious

action was set up by the Baths; on the ground that the skin can be made to act vicariously when functional derangement of the organs exist, and upon this identity of function I lay the foundation of the structure of cure, so to speak, and build upon it in cases such as those we have referred to. By the Droitwich Brine we can not only restore a natural and better tone to the skin, but by so powerful an agent cause the latter to act vicariously, which it will do in certain forms of disorder to which Saline Bathing affords a useful measure of relief. It may be said this vicarious action is too trifling to relieve such severe symptoms as those witnessed in cases of Diabetes, but the three cases I have alluded to proved the contrary, as the symptoms in each case gradually were relieved and all trace of them disappeared. In concluding this necessarily short account of the effects of these Waters, (on different diseases), so far as time has permitted me to do so, I would now state that since the opening of the Establishment commencing on the 1st day of January, 1876, and ending June, 1877, one thousand and twenty-seven cases, including all classes, were treated at the Baths. This number, when I look at it, seems almost incredible, but it is nevertheless the fact, and I think my hearers will bear me out when I say that it is a convincing proof of the incalculable power of these Waters, for to this power only can the cures be attributed, no puffing advertisements having been resorted to, unless the remarks of a few grateful patients be so considered. The course adopted has been to treat each case upon the principles of physiology and to leave the Droitwich Brine to do the rest. Let me once again remind the public of the danger and disappointment which may follow the indiscriminate use of the Baths. *The Bath* that cures one class of sufferers has often little or no effect upon others—precautions have to be observed in the application of the Water, and the constitutional condition of the invalid must be carefully examined. So much perhaps may not have been needlessly said of the treatment of cases in a popular lecture of this kind. But the opportunity of addressing so important an assembly must not be thrown away, and in the interests of humanity I must make bold to ask, whether such results as I have been able to describe ought

to be reserved for the affluent and fortune-favored few, who hitherto have been accustomed to enquire where the re-attainment of health is probable and at once to enter on the pursuit. To the wealthy the search for health is ofttimes pleasure. To the successful it is necessity. To the poor, the uneducated, and the untravelled, it is often a tantalizing object ever receding and eluding them. Surely, then, Benevolence will discern some method of placing these blessed means of restoration within the range of the poor and the afflicted. Some *Hospital* or *Sanatorium* should be founded. A *refuge* for the temporarily wretched and sorrowful. A *resort* for the needy and distressed. To commence such a work of charity small beginnings would suffice. County funds would not be wasted, nay, rather, *these* would assuredly be less required and a material saving secured. The poor labourer exposed to all weathers, working frequently for hours in damp clothes, with a family depending on him and necessarily sharing his hard earned meal, is taken ill with Rheumatic Fever. Unfit for work, he and his family become chargeable to the parish, and he is placed under the Medical Officer, who cannot render him the treatment required; and for weeks, nay, too often months, he remains suffering, half fed, and miserable. I have had many such cases sent to me as a "*dernier resort*," and they have returned home cured and able to resume work. If this class of patients had a Hospital in Droitwich to come to when first seized I would willingly guarantee their cure in one fortnight. Once a Hospital established in some form or other, individual munificence would gradually flow in, and grateful offerings would be made. *Expenditure* would be soon re-couped by saving of valuable Life, and the restoration of health to those whose labour supports their families. If it should please God to honour me by permitting me to benefit the distressed, I should deem the result a higher boon than any advantage which I may gain to myself by the patronage of the affluent.

CONCLUSION.

Such then, so far as I have been enabled to test and discover them are some of the properties of the Droitwich Brine. Nature has here concentrated her forces, and he who administers this Brine may be compared to one who wields a double-edged blade of rare temper and power. Nature has indeed her own secrets, which at times she silently communicates to the favoured few, and there are human beings who seem to be led by an instinct similar to that with which sagacious animals are endowed, which prompts them to seek and find a remedy adapted to their need. But mankind at large act upon suggestions, and lean upon those who assume, or to whom is committed, the responsibility of direction. Here then are powerful remedies which ever require experience, to say not skill in their administration. For the future we have large aspirations and large expectations. We desire, that multitudes who experience the primary symptoms of such diseases as we have described, should seek an early and an efficacious remedy. We would attract the attention of the over-wrought student, of the laborious prosecutor of science or of literature, of the careless pursuer of honour or of wealth who has neglected the warning voice which has repeatedly admonished him. We would invite the sufferer who has escaped the onslaught of fever, whether Rheumatic, Gastric, or Cerebral. We would extend the range and circle of our appeal, and inquire why the countless cases which arise from exposure to a variable and uncertain climate, are not hastened hither on the first manifestation of symptoms which follow upon excessive exertion or neglected warnings. Many a family would then rejoice in the restored health of its bread-winner. Many a household would be gladdened by the renewed activity of the tender and anxious mother. Many a youth and maiden would escape the consequences of attacks which not unfrequently follow them to the grave. But we think that we discern even higher and holier light gleaming through our darkness. The ills of man are not only *punitive* they are *remedial*. That which afflicts the outward frame, not seldom is the voice of Heaven and of God to the inmost soul. We dare not look at the visible consequences of sin as all evil. If sin were followed by no

painful results on this side the tomb, where would be the voice which should reach the conscience or quicken the spirit? Was it for nothing that the flaming Cherubim guarded the Tree of Life from those who had surreptitiously grasped the fruit which gave the knowledge of Good and Evil? To live for ever in the knowledge of good were an unquestioned boon; to exist with the eternal knowledge of evil in the Soul had been an unmitigated sorrow. The Angel guarded the Tree of Life in order that its fruit might be sought and found by a holier and more wholesome path. The easy path of Eden would have proved an undying death. The stony way of Calvary is a wholesome and blessed path of advancing Life and Light. The Cross of Christ is the true *Sanatorium* for the Spirit, and he who seeks bodily restoration through the Light of Salvation, seeks it at least in a frame of submission and holy expectation. May the *Salt of Droitwich* represent that pure Salt of which the Saviour tells, which shall never lose its savor. May those who resort to it do so in dependance on Him who can both afflict and can also heal. May they see in it an emblem of a teaching pure and invigorating as it is searching, and I venture to hope that multitudes will yet bless God that He has given them escape from bodily suffering, as an earnest and a pledge of that Holy Purifying which shall fit them for the inheri- of the Saints in Light.

At the conclusion of the lecture Lord Hampton said—They had all listened with very great interest to the results of Mr. Bainbrigge's experience. Living as he did very close to Droitwich, he had for many years had a very high opinion of the Droitwich Brine, and on more than one occasion he had engaged in an attempt to make the importance of the water more generally known and appreciated. But it had been reserved for the present management, under his able friend Mr. Bainbrigge, to lead the public to recognise the full value of the Water. He could add nothing to the weight of what had been stated by Mr. Bainbrigge, who spoke, not only as a man of known ability and of long medical experience, but as having for several years been actually employed

in testing the properties of the brine. He understood Mr. Bainbrigge to say that since 1st January, 1876, more than a thousand cases had come under his observation. He confessed it was not without surprise—much as he had known as to the effects of the Droitwich water—that he heard Mr. Bainbrigge mention some of the classes of cases which had been treated with success. The address given that day would tend to spread the knowledge of this valuable remedy. He would earnestly council his neighbours in this city and in the district around it not to underrate the value of the Droitwich Brine baths because they were close at home. (Applause.) Many persons no doubt had an idea that, because they had only to drive a few miles to Droitwich, the baths were not worth having. They thought it better to go to the continent and try what the waters there would do for them. He would earnestly recommend his neighbours not to adopt such an idea, but to feel thankful that they had, at their very doors, a medical agent of such immense value as the Droitwich brine. He had the greatest pleasure in asking the meeting to tender their best acknowledgements to Mr. Bainbrigge for the very able and valuable lecture which he had delivered. (Applause.)

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